(b) to (f) The term "Difficult Areas" is neither used nor has been defined by the Ministry. It is primarily for the State Governments to take steps for expanding secondary education in unserved areas, to find ways to increase the rate of retention and to identify and encourage Non-Governmental Organisations including philanthropic bodies to set up secondary schools.

Illiteracy in the country

143. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the present illiteracy rate of rural as well as urban women and men separately, State-wise;

(b) the percentage of adult illiterates living in the country;

(c) the reasons for such high illiteracy; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to make education for all by 2015 a reality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) A Statement showing illiteracy rate of men and women in rural and urban areas, State-wise, as per 2001 Census Report is enclosed. (See below)

(b) As per 2001 Census, literacy rate in India is 64.84% in 7+ age group.

(c) There are various reasons for such high illiteracy including poverty, lack of awareness about relevance of education, socio-economic factors etc.

(d) The Universalisation of Elementary Education and eradication of adult illiteracy form the two-pronged strategy for improving the literacy rate of the country. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a comprehensive programme for universalizing quality Elementary Education by 2010.

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) is entrusted with the target of achieving a sustainable threshold level of 75% literacy by 2007. The thrust area of NLM are improving female literacy in low female literacy areas, organizing projects for residual illiteracy in districts which have substantial

number of illiterates, setting up of continuing education centres for providing opportunities for life-long learning to the neo-lierates and imparting vocational training to neo-literates through Jan Shikshan Sansthans. Special programmes of residual illiteracy have been taken up in low female literacy districts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Jharkhand. In addition, the launching of a special literacy drive for eradication of residual illiteracy in 150 districts, which have the lowest literacy rates, has been approved.

Statement

State/UT-wise illiteracy rate (7+ Age-group) (Census 2001)

Sl.No.	India/State/UT		Illiteracy Rate 7+		
			Person	Male	Female
1	2		3	4	5
	India	Total	35.16	24.74	46.33
		Rural	41.26	29.30	53.87
		Urban	20.08	13.73	27.14
01	Jammu & Kashmir	Total	44.48	33.40	57.00
		Rural	50.22	38.25	63.26
		Urban	28.08	20.00	38.02
02	Himachal Pradesh	Total	23.52	14.65	32.58
		Rural	24.92	15.43	34.32
		Urban	11.05	7.96	14.07
03	Punjab	Total	30.35	24.77	36.64
		Rural	35.28	2895	42.28
		Urban	20.90	16.95	25.51
04	Chandigarh	Total	18.06	13.86	23.53
		Rural	24.42	19.02	33.63
		Urban	17.36	13.22	22.60
05	Uttaranchal	Total	28.38	16.72	40.37
		Rural	31.93	18.22	45.30
		Urban	18.56	12 95	25.23
06	Haryana	Total	32.09	21.51	44.27
		Rural	36.81	24.63	50.73
		Urban	20.84	14.17	28.66

1	2		3	4	5
07	Delhi	Total	18.33	12.67	25.29
		Rural	21.95	13.40	32.61
		Urban	18.07	12.61	24.78
08	Rajasthan	Total	39.59	24.30	56.15
		Rural	44.66	27.84	62.67
		Urban	23.80	13.55	35.33
09	Uttar Pradesh	Total	43.73	31.18	57.78
		Rural	47.47	33.41	63.10
		Urban	30.25	23.24	38.27
10	Bihar	Total	53.00	40.32	66.88
		Rural	56.08	42.91	70.39
		Urban	28.07	20.06	37.41
11	Sikkim	Total	31.19	23.96	39.60
		Rural	33.18	25.55	41.99
		Urban	16.09	12.19	20.84
12	Arunachal Pradesh	Total	45.66	36.17	56.47
		Rural	52.17	42.35	63.06
		Urban	21.74	14.81	3051
13	Nagaland	Total	33.41	28.84	' 38.54
		Rural	37.21	32.42	42.48
		Urban	15.26	12.56	18.58
14	Manipur	Total	29.47	19.67	39.47
	(Excl. 3 Sub-divisions)	Rural	32.71	22.69	43.05
		Urban	20.72	11.29	29.99
15	Mizoram	Total	11.20	9.28	13 25
		Rural	18.73	15.07	22.74
		Urban	387	3.57	4.20
16	Tripura	Total	26.81	18.90	35.09
		Rural	30.28	21.60	39.50
		Urban	10.79	6.79	14.97
17	Meghalaya	Total	37.44	34.57	40.39
		Rural	43.71	40.76	46.76
		Urban	13.70	10.95	16.50

1	2		3	4	5
18	Assam	Total	36.75	28.72	45.39
		Rural	40.27	31.78	49.30
		Urban	14.66	10.26	19.76
19	West Bengal	Total	31.36	22.98	40.39
		Rural	36.58	26.87	46.84
		Urban	18.75	13.87	24.26
20	Jharkhand	Total	46.44	32.70	61.13
		Rural	54.26	39.06	70.11
		Urban	20.86	12.97	30.04
21	Orissa	Total	36.92	24.65	49.49
		Rural	40.16	27.07	53.34
		Urban	19.16	12.07	27.13
22	Chhattisgarh	Total	35.34	22.62	48.15
		Rural	39.52	25.91	53.01
		Urban	19.42	10.61	28.89
23	Madhya Pradesh	Total	36.26	23.94	49.71
		Rural	42.20	28.30	57.24
		Urban	20.61	12.61	29.53
24	Gujarat	Total	30.86	20.34	42.20
		Rural	38.71	25.89	52.16
		Urban	18.16	11.66	25.50
25	Daman & Diu	Total	21.82	13.24	34.39
		Rural	24.17	15.17	40.67
		Urban	17.69	8.88	26.59
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Total	42.37	28.82	59.77
		Rural	50.66	35.50	69.17
		Urban	15.64	9.16	25.46
27	Maharashtra	Total	23.12	14.03	32.97
		Rural	29.64	18.07	41.60
		Urban	14.52	8.97	20.91
28	Andhra Pradesh	Total	39.53	29.68	49.57
		Rural	45.50	34.65	56.50
		Urban	23.91	16.81	31.26

1	2		3	4	5
29	Karnataka	Total	33.36	23.90	43.13
		Rural	40.67	29.55	51.99
		Urban	19.42	13.34	25.88
30	Goa	Total	17.99	11.58	24.63
		Rural	20.33	12.63	28.08
		Urban	15.61	10.54	21.02
31	Lakshadweep	Total	13.34	7.47	19.53
		Rural	14.96	8.51	21.73
		Urban	11.38	6.23	16.87
32	Kerala	Total	9.14	5.76	12.28
		Rural	9.96	6.37	13.31
		Urban	6.81	4.06	9.38
33	Tamil Nadu	Total	26.55	17.58	35.57
		Rural	33.79	22.85	44.72
		Urban	17.47	11.03	24.01
34	Pondicherry	Total	18.76	11.38	26.10
		Rural	26.02	16.50	35.62
		Urban	15.16	8.82	21.43
35	Andaman & Nicobar Island	Total	18.70	13.67	24.76
		Rural	21.30	15.86	27.74
		Urban	13.43	9.35	18.53

Dismal status of literacy

144. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that nearly 60 per cent of country's school children cannot read a paragraph with long sentences according to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) prepared by Pratham, an NGO;

(b) whether it is a fact that the lack of infrastructure is crippling tomorrow's talent; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to improve the dismal picture of education?